

9/10/73

Dear Barry,

For when you return from vacation, I have a few Hunt leads for you. Were I not in the poor financial condition in which I am, I'd have carried these further and long before this. I tried to interest three different Post reporters in aspects of what follows, without success. There are some things I may yet be able to do with other aspects but I have to work through friends who are also limited in what they can do.

You may remember that the story about that \$10,000 in \$100s that Mrs. Hunt had was for an investment by Howard in a motel. I do not know why Chicago authorities would not release it to him at the time of the crash, but they refused. Not until early this year did they, and then not to him. It went to his lawyer who was not his lawyer but a friend of his lawyer, Bittman. Both served together in the U.S. Attorney's office in Chicago. Michael B. Nash went into private practice at 105 W. Adams. The Chicago law directory lists him as in practice alone. However, his letterhead is Crowley and Nash. His account, or at least the one on which a check is drawn, is in the name of Michael B. Nash, not a firm. The check is for that \$10,000 and the \$585.36 Mrs. Hunt also had with her. It is dated January 24, 1973, the total sum, made out to Hogan and Hartson, Attorneys, with this explanation I believe to be important: "For Estate of Dorothy L. Hunt." On February 2 this check went through the Riggs National Bank with the typed endorsement "Pay to the order of E. Howard Hunt HOGAN & HARTSON By" followed by two signatures I believe to be Bittman's and that of William T. Plumb, Jr. Howard signed below them. He was his wife's heir and "personal representative" according to her will. This witnesses to her will, if it interests you (and I assume they are friends and friends sometimes know things), are Phyllis Matusky, Wheaton; Bertha H. Irving, Rockville; and Marie T. Blough, Bethesda.

One of the several things that strike me as odd is that at least ^{four} ~~three~~ ^{five} ~~two~~ of the Hogan & Hartson people figured in this transaction alone. Isn't that pretty expensive talent for a simple matter? Well, with all this talent on the job and with the check through the bank three months earlier, when Judge Shure raised a question in the appointing of Buckley to be executor, it took a month for a letter to be sent him, with an accounting for Hunt that different from the first and unaccepted by more than the inclusion of the \$10,000. Sara-Ann Determan, of H & H, wrote the judge 5/23/73 saying of this \$10,000 that Hunt had claimed as his, "Neither we nor Mr. Hunt make any representation as to the ownership of the \$10,000 in cash; this asset is submitted to probate subject to such claims as may be filed in these proceedings either by Mr. Hunt or by others." The day before Hunt had sworn to an "Amended Accounting" Hunt included this explanation: "Cash in possession of decedent at time of death [Your fiduciary makes no representation with respect to ownership of these assets, but submits them to probate subject to any claims as may be filed in these proceedings either by your fiduciary or others] As of this week, no further claim or explanation. A friend checked it for me."

On January 25, the day after the dating of his check, Nash wrote Bittman that UAL had "recovered other articles belonging to Mrs. Hunt. I have arranged for our investigator, Mr. Gunther Polak, to pick them up Thursday, January 25, 1973 [sic] and mail them to your office."

One lil' ol' scrap of paper in this officially-unaccounted personal property might have other than cash value.

When I learned of the contents of Mrs. Hunt's purse I tried to get some of your reporters to check her ticket for a travel agent and then with the agent on her other travels. It now turns out that she had, with her or not, I don't know, three unused tickets, I presume return tickets, one with Allegheny and worth \$60.00 and one each, value unknown, with Eastern and United. I presume UAL's is the return from Chicago.

Hunt's accounting does not include the bank account she had in the Higgs bank, reflected by the checkbook in her purse and showing as I remember about \$2,500 in it. Innocent explanation is possible: joint account. I don't know.

Her only other assets listed are \$440 in traveler checks and \$179.16, "Third National Bank & Trust Co. Savings Account."

I believe Buckley was appointed vice Howard by Shure. I also believe that this was illegal under Maryland law and the judge knew it.

E. Howard Hunt, blackmailing the President and not keeping \$10,000 when he had it in his hot little and paid inheritance taxes on it? Just isn't like 2+2.

However, it may provide an interesting lead. The coroner had the serial numbers of the bills. I had a general description of the banks of origin (mostly New York) but not the numbers. I think a Chicago Daily News reporter or desk man may also have them. I asked a friend who didn't get them. I was then wondering if this was some of Vesco's. I think the desk man's name is Connor or O'Connor. I referred Bob or Carl to him at the time of the crash. I also referred Kosler to him when he was doing his crash pieces.

In any event, aside from the police, coroner and FBI, Bitman's bank should have those numbers, if it interests you. Beverly Bank, 1357 W. 103rd Street, Chicago 60643. Seems like 15 blocks from Nash's office. The check was from his escrow account, #151.

The first Hunt accounting of the wife's estate gives the account in Third National as \$170.34. This was two months earlier than the final, March 16 and May 23. The earlier accounting was after he got the \$10,000 and he didn't list it. That listing has and item I'd think not variable but it is not on the final, "Claim for jewelry lost and personal effects \$5,061.53." The would seem to be a claim against United. Perhaps if Mr. Chapin has no strong objection they might produce it and an inventory of what they turned over to Polak? The first lists but the one refund due from an airline, Allegheny.

But doesn't it seem odd that this guy so strong for the buck forgets a claim for more than \$5,000 of them and the court doesn't notice or care? Either she had unusual jewelry of high ~~size~~ value of that kind of "personal effects." Or E. Howard was less honest than I'd have supposed he'd be in his circumstances.

Another perhaps odd thing. Hunt would have returned and faced up earlier but he wanted a lawyer. Liddy told him Caddy was waiting. Hunt would not accept Liddy as his lawyer then. But as I remember it, he phoned ^{Caddy} ~~Liddy~~ who was awake and awaiting a call, as I remember the stories of the time of his grand jury appearance. I think he was also Hunt's office mate. My information on this is scanty, so I guess Hunt was holding out for more experienced or better-connected or less handicapping counsel, who turned out to be from the same firm that represented Caddy before the grand jury. Among others. With CIA for a client, among many others. I was quite interested in Caddy to begin with but did not keep a separate file. If what your morgue has on him would not require much work to copy, I'd like to study it.

One alternative on the lawyer: maybe someone was not anxious for Hunt to return, not as anxious as he was.

Please excuse the types. It is past bedtime.

Sincerely,

Remember who carried Vesco's money?